



Viewed from Manhattan, first responders and others work at the scene of a derailed Metro North passenger train in the Bronx borough of New York Dec. 1, 2013. The train derailed on a curved section of track in the Bronx early Sunday, coming to rest just inches from the water, killing at least four people and injuring more than 60, authorities said. Police divers searched the waters to make sure no passenger had been thrown in, as other emergency crews scoured the surrounding woods.

Associated Press

NYC train derailment kills 4, hurts more than 60

DEEPTI HAJELA
VERENA DOBNIK
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A New York City commuter train rounding a riverside curve derailed Sunday, killing four people and injuring more than 60 in a crash that threw passengers from the toppling cars and left a snaking chain of twisted wreckage just inches from the water. Some of the roughly 150 passengers on the early morning Metro-North train from Poughkeepsie to Manhattan were jolted from sleep around 7:20 a.m. to screams and the frighten-

ing sensation of their compartment rolling over on a bend in the Bronx where the Hudson and Harlem rivers meet. When the motion stopped, four or five of the seven cars had lurched off the rails. It was the latest accident in a troubled year for the second-biggest U.S. commuter railroad, which had never experienced a passenger death in an accident in its 31-year-history. "Four people lost their lives today in the holiday season, right after Thanksgiving," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said at a news conference. Eleven of those hurt were

believed to be critically injured and another six seriously hurt, according to the Fire Department. The train operator was among the injured, Cuomo said. The governor said the track did not appear to be faulty, leaving speed as a possible culprit for the crash. But he noted that the National Transportation Safety Board would determine what happened. The Federal Railroad Administration was also sending investigators to the scene. Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman

Thomas F. Prendergast said investigators would look at numerous factors, including the train, the track and signal system, the operators and speed. The speed limit on the curve is 30 mph (48 kph), compared with 70 mph (113 kph) in the area approaching it, MTA spokeswoman Marjorie Anders said. The train's data recorders should be able to tell how fast it was traveling, she said. One passenger, Frank Tatulli, told WABC-TV that the train appeared to be going "a lot faster" than usual as it approached the sharp

curve near the Spuyten Duyvil station, which takes its name from a Dutch word for a local waterway separating the Bronx from Manhattan, sometimes translated as "Devil's whirlpool." The train was about half full at the time of the crash, rail officials said, with some passengers likely heading to the city for holiday shopping. Joel Zaritsky was dozing as he traveled to a dental convention. "I woke up when the car started rolling several times.

Continued on Page 3

Officials: Worst tech bugs over for Healthcare.gov

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration said Sunday that the worst of the online glitches, crashes and delays may be over for the problem-plagued government health care website, a key component of President Barack Obama's signature domestic policy initiative.

The stakes are high for Obama who has seen his approval ratings drop sharply since the rocky Oct. 1 rollout of the HealthCare.gov website, threatening his ability to advance his second-term agenda. The website's shaky launch has left Obama's fellow Democrats nervous ahead of next year's elections when control of Congress will be at stake.

The Department of Health



This screenshot made Nov. 26, 2013, shows the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' web page for the Spanish language version Healthcare.gov.

and Human Services said Sunday that the website is working more smoothly. But

that doesn't mean HealthCare.gov is ready for a clean bill of health.

Associated Press

Officials acknowledged more work remains on the website that included hundreds of software bugs, inadequate equipment and inefficient management for its national debut two months ago. Federal workers and private contractors have undertaken an intense reworking of the system, but the White House's chief troubleshooter cautioned some users could still encounter trouble.

"The bottom line — HealthCare.gov on Dec. 1 is night and day from where it was on Oct. 1," Jeff Zients told reporters.

More than 50,000 people can log on to the website at one time and more than 800,000 people will be able to shop for insurance coverage each day, the government estimated in a report released Sunday. If true, it's a dramatic improvement from the system's first weeks, when frustrated buyers watched their computer screen freeze, the website crash and error messages multiply. HealthCare.gov, which services 36 states, signed up just 27,000 people for health insurance coverage in October, while the 14 states that run their own websites enrolled 79,000. The total of roughly 106,000 was far off the administration's estimate that nearly 500,000 people would enroll within the first month of the six-month enrollment period.

The new figures for the website's capacity — which could not be independently verified — suggest millions of Americans could turn to their computers to shop for and buy policies from private insurers by the Dec. 23 deadline so their coverage can kick in on the first of the year.

"There's not really any way to verify from the outside that the vast majority of people who want to enroll can now do so, but we'll find out at least anecdotally over the coming days if the system can handle the traffic and provide a smooth experience for people trying to sign up," said Larry Levitt, a senior adviser at the Kaiser Family Foundation.

But, he added, HealthCare.gov is clearly working better than when it first went online. Its challenge now is to convince users who were frustrated during their first visit to give it another chance.

Politically, a fixed website could also offer a fresh start for Obama and his fellow Democrats after a wave of bad publicity surrounding the president's chief domestic achievement.

"This website is technology. It's going to get better. It's already better today," said Democratic Rep. Keith Ellison, who is a co-chairman of the liberal Congressional Progressive Caucus. "And we're only going to be working out more kinks as we go forward."

Amid all the problems with HealthCare.gov, Obama set a deadline for Saturday for several significant problems to be resolved. The administration organized a conference call with reporters Sunday morning to give a status report and boast that 400 technical problems had been resolved but declined to say how many items remain on the to-do list.

Even with the repairs in place, the site still won't be able to do everything the administration wants, and companion sites for small businesses and Spanish speakers have been delayed. □

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Continued on Page 3

NYC train

Then I saw the gravel coming at me, and I heard people screaming," he told The Associated Press, holding his bloody right hand. "There was smoke everywhere and debris. People were thrown to the other side of the train."

Nearby residents awoke to a building-shaking boom. Angel Gonzalez was in bed in his high-rise apartment overlooking the rail curve when he heard the roar. "I thought it was a plane that crashed," he said.

Mike Gallo heard the same noise as he was walking his dog.

He looked down at the tracks and "knew it was a tragedy right away. I saw injured people climbing out of the train."

Within minutes, dozens of emergency crews arrived and carried passengers away on stretchers, some wearing neck braces. Others, bloodied and scratched, held ice packs to their heads.

Firefighters shattered windows of the toppled train cars to reach passengers, and they used pneumatic jacks and air bags to make sure they uncovered any victims who might have been pinned by train seats or other objects.

Police divers searched the waters to make sure no one had been thrown in. Other emergency crews scoured the surrounding woods.

Federal investigators planned to turn the cars upright to be certain no one was trapped beneath. Three men and one wom-

an were killed, the MTA said. Three of the dead were found outside the train, and one was found inside, authorities said. The victims' names had not yet been released.

Edwin Valero was in an apartment building above the accident. At first, he said, he didn't notice that the train had flipped over. "I didn't realize it had been turned over until I saw a firefighter walking on the window," he said.

To Cuomo, "it looked like a toy train set that was mangled by some super-powerful force," the governor said in a phone interview with CNN.

As deadly as the derailment was, the toll could have been far greater had it happened on a weekday, or had the lead car plunged into the water instead of coming to rest on its edge.

"On a workday, fully occupied, it would have been a tremendous disaster," New York City Fire Commissioner Salvatore Joseph Cassano told reporters at the scene. For decades, the National Transportation Safety Board has been urging railroads to install technology that can stop derailling caused by excessive speed.

A rail-safety law passed by Congress in 2008 gave commuter and freight railroads until the end of 2015 to install the systems, known as positive train control. They use GPS, wireless radio and computers to monitor trains.

Aimed at preventing hu-

man error — the cause of about 40 percent of train accidents — they can also prevent trains from colliding, entering tracks undergoing maintenance or going the wrong way because of a switching mistake.

But the systems are expensive and complicated. Railroads and their allies in Congress are trying to push back the installation deadline another five to seven years.

Metro-North is in the process of installing the technology. It now has what's called an "automatic train control" signal system, which automatically applies the brakes if an engineer fails to respond to an alert that indicates the speed is excessive.

Such systems can slow trains in some circumstances, but not bring them to a



An Amtrak train, top, traveling on an unaffected track, passes a derailed Metro North commuter train, Sunday, Dec. 1, 2013 in the Bronx borough of New York. Officials are standing on a curve in the tracks where the Metro North train derailed.

Associated Press

halt, said Grady Cothen, a former Federal Railroad Administration safety official.

It's possible, but very unlikely, that the accident was caused by a brake failure, Cothen said.

Trains rely upon an air brake system that automatically stops the train if the brakes suddenly lose air pressure, he said. If the brakes were

gradually failing, the train engineer should have had plenty of warning in time to stop the train, he said.

Amtrak Empire service was halted for hours between New York City and Albany but resumed Sunday afternoon, with some delays. Amtrak said its Northeast Corridor service between Boston and Washington was unaffected. □



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Family: American detained in N. Korea in good health

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

The family of an elderly U.S. tourist detained for more than a month in North Korea said Saturday the Swedish ambassador has seen the man and found him to be in good health. Merrill Newman's family in California said in a statement that the State Department told them that the Swedish ambassador to North Korea had visited the 85-year-old at a Pyongyang hotel.

"We were very pleased to hear that the Ambassador was allowed to pay this first visit to Merrill," the statement said. "As a result of the visit, we know that Merrill is in good health. ... Merrill reports that he is being well treated and that the food is good."

An Obama administration official called for his release, urging North Korea to consider his age and health conditions.

Sweden handles consul-



This 2005 file photo provided by the Palo Alto Weekly shows Merrill Newman, a retired finance executive and Red Cross volunteer, in Palo Alto, Calif.

Associated Press

ar issues for Americans in North Korea as the U.S. and North Korea have no diplomatic relations.

Newman's family said the ambassador's visit eased their concerns about his health, and pleaded with North Korean authorities to take his health and age into account and let him go as an act of humanitarian compassion.

The family's report came hours after North Korea state media released video showing Newman reading an apology for alleged crimes during the Korean War and for "hostile acts" against the state during a recent trip.

Pyongyang has been accused of previously coercing statements from detainees. There was no way to

reach Newman and determine the circumstances of the alleged confession. But it was riddled with stilted English and grammatical errors, such as "I want not punish me."

"I have been guilty of a long list of indelible crimes against DPRK government and Korean people," Newman purportedly wrote in a four-page statement, adding: "Please forgive me."

The statement, carried in the North's official Korean Central News Agency, said the war veteran allegedly attempted to meet with any surviving soldiers he had trained during the Korean War to fight North Korea, and that he admitted to killing civilians and brought an e-book criticizing North Korea. DPRK stands for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, North Korea's official name.

It wasn't clear what would happen to Newman now.

But the statement alleges that Newman says if he goes back to the U.S. he will tell the truth about the country — a possible indication that Newman could be released.

The apology can be seen as Pyongyang taking steps needed to release Newman, said Yoo Ho-Yeol, a professor of North Korea studies at Korea University in Seoul. North Korea likely issued the confession in the form of an apology to resolve Newman's case quickly without starting legal proceedings, Yoo said. North Korea is extremely sensitive about any criticism and regularly accuses Washington and Seoul of seeking to overthrow its authoritarian system through various means — claims the U.S. and South Korea dismiss. The State Department has repeatedly warned Americans about traveling to the country, citing the risk of arbitrary detention. □





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National Zoo names panda Bao Bao

BRETT ZONGKER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Smithsonian's National Zoo is naming its female giant panda cub Bao Bao after receiving more than 123,000 votes online from the public to help give its new cub an identity.

Bao Bao, which means "treasure" or "precious," is only the second surviving cub born at the National Zoo since the first pandas arrived in 1972 to commemorate President Richard Nixon's historic visit to China. Pandas have remained a happy symbol of diplomacy between the two countries.

Panda mother Mei Xiang has been caring for her cub in the panda den since she was born Aug. 23. Bao Bao will have her public unveiling early in 2014. Mei Xiang's only other surviving cub, a male named Tai Shan, was born in 2005 and was returned to China in 2010 for breeding. Male panda Tian Tian is the father of both cubs.

The zoo asked the public to vote for one of five names for the new cub. The others were Ling Hua, Long Yun, Mulan and Zhen Bao. The names were submitted by Chinese Ambassador Cui Tiankai, U.S. Ambassador to China Gary Locke, panda keepers at the National Zoo, the fundraising group Friends of the National Zoo and the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda.

The chosen name was submitted by Friends of the National Zoo.

In a videotaped message played at the zoo Sunday, first lady Michelle Obama said it was first lady Pat Nixon who helped "jump-start panda diplomacy" after admiring the bears during the Nixons' visit to China in 1972. "After decades of close collaboration with our Chinese partners, these remarkable animals stand as a symbol of the growing connections between our two countries," Obama said.

Peng Liyuan, the first lady of China, also sent a video message, saying giant pandas are China's "national treasure."

"Many people love baby pandas as they love their own children," she said in Mandarin.

Giant pandas are considered critically endangered in the wild, and breeding them in captivity has proved difficult, especially in Washington. Zoo scientists have made numerous attempts to artificially inseminate its female panda because the pair failed to breed naturally.

The new birth has given zoo scientists renewed confidence in the Washington pandas' ability to help grow the panda species.

Last year, Mei Xiang gave birth to a cub, but it died after six days because its lungs hadn't fully developed and weren't sending enough oxygen to its liver. The zoo's first panda couple, Ling Ling and Hsing Hsing, had five cubs during the 1980s, though none lived more than a few days. □



In this Nov. 29, 2013 photo provided by the Smithsonian National Zoo, a giant panda cub is measured as it is about to turn 100 days old, at the Smithsonian National Zoo in Washington.

Associated Press

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Arias fades from view as case veiled in secrecy

BRIAN SKOLOFF
Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP)—Formonths, Jodi Arias was a television staple, every minute of her murder trial broadcast live while cable network commentators railed nightly about the case. The now-convicted murderer took to the spotlight in celebrity style and embraced the attention at every turn as she spent weeks on the witness stand and did a series of media interviews.

But Arias has vanished from view since her trial ended in May, and the judge has done a complete about-face.

She has shut the media and public out of nearly every hearing in the case and drawn complaints from constitutional lawyers that she has gone too far.

"The trial court has gone from transparency to black-out and bewilderment," said attorney David Bodney, who represents several media outlets, including the Arizona Republic, fighting for transparency. "There have been repeated flagrant violations of the public's constitutional right to attend proceedings."

Arias was convicted of murder in May, but the jury couldn't reach a verdict on her sentence. Prosecutors are now pursuing a second penalty phase with a new jury in an effort to get the death penalty. No date for a new trial has been set.



In a Jan. 3, 2013 file photo, defendant Jodi Arias listens during her trial at Maricopa County Court in Phoenix.

Arias, 33, admitted she killed her boyfriend in 2008 at his suburban Phoenix home but claimed it was self-defense. Travis Alexander suffered nearly 30 knife wounds, had his throat slit and was shot in the forehead in what prosecutors argued was a jealous rage. Judge Sherry Stephens has held hearing after hearing behind closed doors as the next steps of the case unfold almost entirely under a shroud of secrecy. Over the last several months, she has heard arguments over sequestering the new jury, moving the case out of Phoenix, Arias' desire to fire her lead attorney and allowing live television coverage of the retrial, among other issues.

She has denied each request, but quietly with orders released days after the secret hearings as the case languishes without public scrutiny even as Arias' legal tab is being picked up by taxpayers at a cost exceeding \$1.7 million. Meanwhile, in yet another element of secrecy, Maricopa County Attorney Bill Montgomery has refused to provide a tally of how much it has cost to prosecute the case, including paying for expert witnesses throughout the five-month trial. Stephens allowed virtually unfettered access to the first trial, which was broadcast live and became to fans like a real-life soap opera as they traveled from around the country to get

in the courtroom. She now says the hearing closures are intended to protect Arias' right to an impartial jury, but Bodney says the judge has gone to the extreme, often simply locking the courtroom doors without issuing an order as to why, in violation of the U.S. Constitution. "The public is deprived of its First Amendment right to attend criminal proceedings," Bodney said. "The public has a right to be heard before they're just locked out." The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees such basic rights as freedom of speech and the press. Even arguments by attorneys over media access

to proceedings in the case have been closed to the media.

An irony not lost on Bodney is that the intense media interest in the case has largely evolved from Arias' own actions by courting interviews and operating a Twitter account and selling her artwork from behind bars through a third party. She regularly posts inspirational quotes, links to purchase her drawings and solicitations for donations for her appeals.

A clerk for Stephens said the judge could not comment on an ongoing case. Defense lawyer Kirk Nurmi has not returned telephone messages.

"It's a balance, but I believe when push comes to shove, a defendant's right to a fair trial is probably going to trump what otherwise is considered the public's right to attend trial," Montgomery said.

Phoenix defense lawyer Mel McDonald, a former Maricopa County judge and federal prosecutor, said the judge likely never expected the Arias case would attract such publicity and is now trying to dial back access to protect the record for inevitable appeals.

"The more that comes out, the harder it's going to be to find an impartial jury and the greater the risk of prejudice and error," McDonald said. □



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Canadian arrested for trying to sell info to China

ROB GILLIES

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Police said Sunday that a Canadian man has been arrested for allegedly trying to sell classified information to the Chinese government about Canada's warship building procurement strategy.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said that Qing Quentin Huang, 53, of Burlington, Ontario, was arrested on Saturday and appeared in court Sunday.

RCMP Chief Supt. Jennifer Strachan said the suspect is charged with communicating with a foreign entity under the Security of Information Act.

Police said the suspect works for Lloyd Register, a ship design sub-contractor to Irving Shipbuilding. The information relates to Canada's

strategy on building patrol ships, frigates, naval auxiliary vessels, science research vessels and ice breakers.

Police said the suspect acted alone in trying to pass information to the Chinese government.

"In these types of cases, sharing of information may give a foreign entity a tactical, military or competitive advantage by knowing the specification of vessels responsible for defending Canadian waters and Canadian sovereignty," Strachan said.

Strachan called it valuable research and development information. She said it could also provide an unfair competitive and economic advantage.

Police first learned of the situation on Thursday and were able to act swiftly to safeguard the information involved,



Chief Superintendent Larry Tremblay, Director General of the RCMP Federal Policing Criminal Operations of the RCMP, speaks during a news conference in Toronto on Sunday, Dec 1, 2013.

Associated Press

Strachan said. "We are confident our prompt and firm intervention has limited the damage to our collective safety and security," Strachan said.

RCMP Supt. Larry Tremblay said Canada's foreign affairs department has been in contact with their Chinese counterparts about the case.

The suspect is due back in court on Wednesday for a bail hearing. He faces a maximum sentence of life in prison if convicted. □



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Croatians vote against same-sex marriage

ELDAR EMRIC

Associated Press

ZAGREB, Croatia (AP) — A majority of Croatians voted in a referendum Sunday to ban gay marriages in what is a major victory for the Catholic Church-backed conservatives in the European Union's newest nation.

The state electoral commission, citing near complete results, said 65 percent of those who voted answered "yes" to the referendum question: "Do you agree that marriage is matrimony between a man and a woman?" About 34 percent voted against.

The result meant that Croatia's constitution will be amended to ban same-sex marriage.

The vote has deeply divided Croatia. Liberal groups have said the referendum's question infringes on basic human rights. The Church-backed groups have gathered 750,000 signatures in its support.

Referendum results signal that right-wing and conservative forces have been gaining strength in Croa-

tia amid the deepening economic crisis and widespread joblessness.

The country of 4.4 million, which became EU's 28th

lower to vote "yes" in the referendum. Nearly 90 percent of Croatians are Roman Catholics.

"Marriage is the only union

rights to gays and lesbians living together.

"The referendum result must not be the reason for new divisions," Josipovic said. "We have serious economic and social problems. It's not worth it to focus on such issues."

Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic said earlier "this is the last referendum that gives a chance to the majority to strip a minority of its rights."

Conservatives have also started gathering signatures for another referendum, demanding a ban of the Cyrillic alphabet in Croatia. The Cyrillic is used in neighboring Serbia and by minority Serbs in Croatia. The nationalists blame the Serbs for atrocities committed by their troops during Croatia's 1991-95 war for

independence from the Serb-led Yugoslavia.

The EU hasn't officially commented on the referendum, but has clashed with Croatia over some of its other laws, including an extradition law that has prevented its citizens from being handed over to the bloc's other member states, which Croatia had to amend under pressure from Brussels.

Several hundred gay rights supporters marched in the capital, Zagreb, on Saturday urging a "no" vote.

"I will vote against because I think that the referendum is not a festival of democracy, but a festival of oppression against a minority, which fights for its rights and which does not have its rights," Jura Matulic, a university student, said. □



A voter casts a ballot at a polling station in Pula, western Croatia, Sunday Dec. 1, 2013.

Associated Press

member in July, has taken steps to improve gay rights, but issues such as same-sex marriage remain highly sensitive in the staunchly Catholic nation.

The referendum was called by the "In the Name of the Family" conservative group after Croatia's center-left government drafted a law to let gay couples register as "life partners."

The Catholic Church leaders have urged their fol-

lowers to vote "yes" in the referendum. Nearly 90 percent of Croatians are Roman Catholics.

"Marriage is the only union enabling procreation," Croatian Cardinal Josip Bozanic said in his message to the followers. "This is the key difference between a marriage and other unions."

Croatia's liberal president, Ivo Josipovic, said he voted against amending the constitution. Josipovic said the referendum result must be respected, but added the government is preparing a law to allow some

Israel's former leader slams Netanyahu over U.S.

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert says his successor has severely damaged the country's relations with the United States. Speaking before a security conference, Olmert said Sunday that Benjamin Netanyahu's public criticism of the American-led nuclear deal with Iran was provocative and counterproductive. He said he too would differ with the American president, but always made sure to do so in private.

In an apparent response, Netanyahu responded that in contrast to others when it came to the vital security of Israel's citizens "I will not be silent."

Netanyahu has called the interim deal with Iran a



"historic mistake" and declared Israel not bound by the agreement.

Netanyahu believes Iran is determined to produce a nuclear bomb and offering it relief from sanctions at this time amounts to appeasement. □

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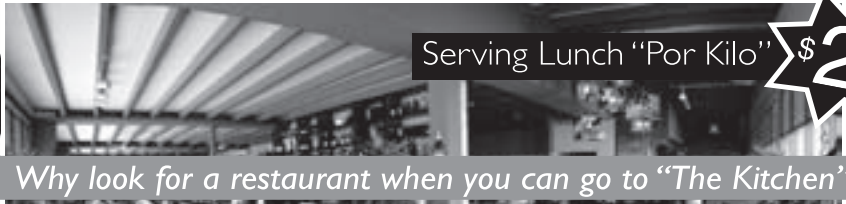
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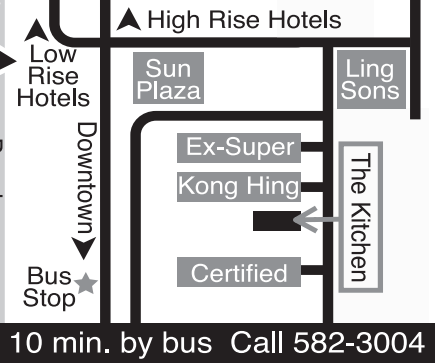


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Hamas cancels anniversary rally over economic woes

IBRAHIM BARZAK
Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)

— The Gaza Strip's ruling Hamas movement canceled its upcoming anniversary rally Sunday, saying it was inappropriate to celebrate at a time of deep economic woes in the crowded seaside territory. It was the first time the Islamic militant group has canceled the festivities since seizing power six years ago. Hamas has used the elaborate annual commemoration of its December 1987 founding to demonstrate its control, with large military-style gatherings attended by hundreds of thousands of people.

The decision illustrated just how hard the Gaza economy has been hit since Egypt's Islamist President Mohammed Morsi, Hamas' main patron, was ousted in a July military coup. Morsi hails from the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas' parent movement, and moved to improve ties with the Islamic militant group.

The new military government has imposed tough border restrictions, including the destruction of smuggling tunnels that long sustained the Gaza economy and provided a key source of income for Hamas.

Hamas official Ashraf Abu Zayed said funds allocated for the celebration, scheduled for next week, would be used "to alleviate the suffering" of the people.

"The decision to cancel the rally is a message of solidarity recognizing the difficult circumstances experienced by our people in Gaza," Abu Zayed said.

Egypt's border crackdown,

accompanied by Israeli restrictions on Gaza, has caused power cuts, fuel shortages and the virtual collapse of the construction industry, a major employer in Gaza. Last month, the lack of power caused a major spill at Gaza's main sewage treatment plant, flooding downtown streets in rancid waste.

According to the United Nations, unemployment has risen since the tunnels were closed and now stands at roughly 30 percent. Nearly one half of Gaza's 1.7 million people receive food aid from UNRWA, the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees.

Hamas seized power in 2007 after taking the territory from the forces of Western-backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. With Abbas now governing from the West Bank, the takeover has left the Palestinians divided between two governments. Repeated attempts at reconciliation have failed.

Despite its difficulties, Hamas maintains its rigid opposition against Israel and says it remains committed to destruction of the Jewish state.


Hamas, which has killed hundreds of Israelis in suicide bombings and other attacks, battled Israel to a stalemate during eight days of fighting a year ago. It maintains an arsenal of thousands of rockets and other weapons.



Abu Zayed said although the celebrations were canceled, Hamas "didn't stop the preparation and processing for the battle of liberation and victory, God willing." □





A Palestinian girl holds up a paper boat with a "No to Siege" written in Arabic at the fishermen's port in Gaza City, Saturday, Nov. 30, 2013 during a protest against Israel's naval blockade of Gaza.

Associated Press



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U.N. in Iraq worried about uptick in bodies found

KIM GAMEL
SAMEER N. YACIOUB
Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — The number of Iraqis slain "execution-style" surged last month, the U.N. said Sunday, raising fears of a return of the death squads that killed thousands during the darkest days of sectarian violence that followed the U.S.-led invasion.

The increase in targeted killings comes even though the U.N. reported that the overall death toll for November dropped to 659, compared with 979 in October. More than 8,000 people have been killed since the start of the year. In an example of other dangers facing Iraqis, three bombs tore through



In this file photo taken Wednesday, Nov. 27, 2013, mourners chant slogans against sectarianism while carrying the coffin of Sunni Sheik Adnan Majeed al-Ghanem during his funeral in Basra, Iraq's second-largest city, 340 miles (550 kilometers) southeast of Baghdad, Iraq.

Associated Press

es have been killed since January, the U.N. said.

U.N. envoy to Iraq Nickolay Mladenov singled out an increase in the number of bodies found, including some that were beheaded, and urged the Iraqi government to move quickly to find the attackers and hold them responsible.

Last week, Iraqi police found 31 bodies of men, women and children who were shot in the head in three separate places around Baghdad, recalling the height of sectarian violence in 2006-2007 when extremists abducted and killed members of other religious groups, although the numbers remain significantly lower.

"I am profoundly disturbed by the recent surge in execution-style killings that have been carried out in a particularly horrendous and unspeakable manner," Mladenov said.

His spokeswoman Eliana Nabaa said the decline in the overall death toll was due to a shift in tactics, with insurgents increasingly turning to targeted killings and a reduction in the number of bombings.

"Bombings tend to kill larger numbers at any one time, whereas targeted killings usually kill the target and on occasion one or two others, hence the decline in numbers of casualties and rise in targeted killings," she said in an email. The deadliest attack Sunday, for example, was the triple bombing that killed 11 mourners and wounded 45 at a funeral for a local Sunni tribal sheik's son who died a day earlier in Wajihya, 80 kilometers (45 miles) northeast of the capital, police and hospital officials said. □

the funeral procession of the son of an anti-al-Qaida Sunni tribal chief northeast of Baghdad, the deadliest in a wave of attacks that killed 17 people Sunday, Iraqi officials said.

"It seems that history is always repeating itself in Iraq," said Qassim Haider, a Shiite owner of a menswear shop in eastern Baghdad. He said he has stopped accepting invitations to visit friends in mainly Sunni neighborhoods due to fears of violence.

Widespread chaos nearly tore the country apart following the 2003 U.S.-led invasion that ousted Saddam Hussein. The violence ebbed in 2008 after a series of U.S.-Iraqi military offensives, a Shiite militia cease-fire and a Sunni revolt against al-Qaida in Iraq, but that trend was reversed after a deadly April 23 crackdown by security forces on a northern Sunni protest camp.

Iraqis have grown used to

random explosions, but the recent discoveries of bullet-riddled bodies have many worried about a long-feared resumption of all-out warfare between Shiite and Sunni factions. Mazin Sabeeh, a Sunni government employee from northern Baghdad, said he has started avoiding Shiite neighborhoods to avoid being captured and killed by militiamen.

"Apparently, some people from the other sect are still determined to take revenge upon Sunnis," he said.

The November casualty toll included 565 civilians and 94 security forces killed and 1,373 Iraqis wounded in attacks, according to the U.N. mission in Iraq.

Baghdad and surrounding areas saw the highest number killed last month, at 224, followed by the volatile northern Ninevah province, with 107.

In all, at least 7,157 civilians and 952 Iraqi security forces



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ARUBA WINE & DINING

Report: Iran needs more nuclear power plants

NASSER KARIMI
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's nuclear chief said Sunday that the Islamic Republic needs more nuclear power plants, the country's official news agency reported, just after it struck a deal regarding its contested nuclear program with world powers.

Ali Akbar Salehi said the additional nuclear power would help the country reduce its carbon emissions and its consumption of oil, IRNA reported. He said Iran should produce 150 tons of nuclear fuel to supply five nuclear power plants.

"We should take required action for building power plants for 20,000 megawatts of electricity" in the long term, Salehi said.

The comments come after Iran agreed to freeze part of its nuclear program in return for Western powers easing crippling economic sanctions.

The deal requires Iran to cap its uranium enrichment level at 5 percent, far below the 90 percent threshold needed for a warhead. That 5 percent



In this Tuesday, Oct. 26, 2010 file photo, the reactor building of the Bushehr nuclear power plant is seen just outside the southern city of Bushehr, Iran.

Associated Press

uranium can be used at nuclear power plants.

Iran also pledged to "neutralize" its stockpile of 20 percent enriched uranium — the highest level acknowledged by Tehran — by either diluting its strength or converting it to fuel for research reactors, which produced isotopes for medical treatments and other civilian use.

Iran says its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. Western powers fear Iran could use its nuclear

program to make atomic weapons.

Iran's only nuclear power plant, near the southern port of Bushehr, produces some 1,000 megawatts of electricity. The plant came online with help from Russia, which will provide fuel for it through 2021.

Salehi said Iran is in talks with several countries — including Russia — to build four more nuclear power plants to produce 5,000 megawatts of power in the near future. □

UN in Iraq worried about uptick in bodies found

KIM GAMEL
SAMEER N. YACOB
Associated Press

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The increase in targeted killings comes even though the U.N. reported that the overall death toll for November dropped to 659, compared with 979 in October. More than 8,000 people have been killed since the start of the year. In an example of other dangers facing Iraqis, three bombs tore through the funeral procession of the son of an anti-al-Qaida Sunni tribal chief northeast of Baghdad, the deadliest in a wave of attacks that killed 17 people Sunday, Iraqi officials said.

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Mazin Sabeeh, a Sunni government employee from northern Baghdad, said he has started avoiding Shiite neighborhoods to avoid being captured and killed by militiamen.

"Apparently, some people from the other sect are still determined to take revenge upon Sunnis," he said. "With the current security vacuum and deterioration, they think it is the time to settle old scores." □



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Thousands march in Honduras to demand vote recount

ALBERTO ARCE
Associated Press

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — Thousands of people marched peacefully Sunday in Honduras' capital to support opposition presidential candidate Xiomara Castro in her claim that last weekend's election was fraudulent. The electoral court has declared conservative Juan Orlando Hernandez of the ruling National Party as the winner. The court said that with 99 percent of ballots counted, Hernandez had 37 percent and Castro was second with 29 percent. Six other candidates shared the remaining votes. Both Castro and her husband, former President Manuel Zelaya, who was ousted by a coup in 2009, led the protest march from a pickup truck carrying the body of a militant of their Libre Party, who was shot to death hours before the demonstration began. "We are here to denounce the culture of death pro-



Supporters of presidential candidate Xiomara Castro walk past riot police during a protest march in the capital city of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Sunday Dec. 1, 2013. Castro called for her supporters to pour out in the streets to demand a vote-by-vote recount of last Sunday's election a move that could mean further political instability for this poor Central American country.

Associated Press

moted since the coup, this can only be a political crime," said Zelaya, whose removal from office has left Honduras polarized. Libre Party supporter Jose Ardon was kidnapped late

Saturday and was found shot to death hours later. He was leader of a group known as the "the motorcyclists," motorcycle riders who have led all marches in support of Zelaya and his

wife since the coup. Zelaya is calling for a vote-by-vote recount and says that as head of the Libre Party he will file a formal complaint with the electoral tribunal Monday.

"If the vote recount is not done by Friday, the legal deadline, we will legally challenge the election," Zelaya said outside the electoral tribunal's warehouse where the vote count is taking place. Libre Party supporters put Ardon's coffin outside the building while Zelaya spoke. "If they do not accept our complaint, we will go to the courts, and if the courts don't take our case, we will go to international bodies," Zelaya said. Castro alleges tally sheets were altered, dead or absent people were included in the voter registry, and inadequate monitoring of polling stations allowed for election fraud. Late Friday, Castro, 54, called the election "a disgusting monstrosity that has robbed me of the presidency" and said she would not recognize Hernandez's government. Hernandez has said his victory is legitimate and he won't negotiate. He hasn't comment directly on the fraud allegations. □



In this Nov. 9, 2013 photo, the photograph of a person who disappeared during the civil war is pasted on a wall outside Congress at Guatemala City. With fewer than 1,000 of the missing found, successive Guatemalan governments have resisted local and international pressure to launch a full-scale effort to find and identify the rest.

Associated Press

Central American mothers look for missing children

GUATEMALA CITY (AP) — Fifty Central American mothers have gathered in Guatemala to begin their trek through Mexico to look for their missing sons and daughters who disappeared there on their way to the United States.

The mothers from Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala will cross into Mexico on Sunday, and travel as far north as the state of San Luis Potosi.

Caravan organizer Elisabel Hernandez said Saturday that this year the mothers won't make it all the way to Mexico's northern border states because authorities say they can't guarantee their safety.

This is the seventh year the group has made the trek hoping to find their loved ones or at least bring attention to the plight of migrants who have disappeared in Mexico. □



La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino Pays Homage to Papiamentu



Eagle Beach -- A cultural evening dedicated to the island's language of Papiamentu unfolded at La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino, an initiative of the Environment and Health Committee. Expertly emcee by Ena Vrolijk, the evening took guests and dignitaries through a varied cultural program which included poetry reading, and music.

At the beginning of the evening, a charming duo of young singers, Evaniella & Ryeza Rincones, performed a number of Papiamentu songs developed in honor of Book Week in the national library. The songs, promoting books

and reading encourage the younger generation to educate themselves and further their language skills. Invited guests also enjoyed

a number of poems written at the resort, as part of an internal poetry contest, and appreciated poetry declaimed by venerated local poet Belen Kock-Marchena. The evening was accompanied by master Tina Ruiz, and Club Di Movimiento under the direction of Samantha Westera Jupp performed an original ballet-piece dedicated to Aruba.

As the highlight of the evening, Astrid Britten, the library director was presented with one of Belen Kock-Marchena masterpieces, nicely designed, printed on a poster, the poem "Di Ken Anto," encouraging the wide use of Papiamentu everywhere and the further-development of the language.

Beverly Graves, a La Cabana owner from the USA delighted the crowd with



her excellent knowledge of Papiamentu and General Manager Joe Najjar chimed in with a warm welcome address, in Papiamentu, naturally.

An impromptu musical presentation by John Booi on his harmonica added nicely to the ambience, and Joyce Pereira, the President of Fundacion "Lanta Papiamentu," shared words of encouragement and gratitude for hosting



Kock and Belen Kock-Marchena, teachers Cornelia Aventurin-Connor and Tricia Cijntje of Colegio Hilario Angela, President of the board Willie Mosconi and wife, Assistant General Manager Jessica Franken, writers Olga Buckley and Marilis Becker and Zahira Zaandam, as well as all other individuals who dedicated their time to the promotion and cultivation



an event of this kind in the tourism sector. She was surprised and pleased that the resort would dedicate resources and talent, to an activity related to the island's maternal language. The evening which was presented with the help of Glenda Brokke-Croes featured a glittering list on invitees including Padu Lampe, the island's father of Culture, linguists Ramon Todd Dandaree and Mirto Lacle, literary activists Dolfi

of the language during 2013, proclaimed by the governments as the Year of Papiamentu!

Throughout her presentation, Emcee Ena Vrolijk explained that the resort values the local language, promotes its use, and encourages hotel associates, sometimes native speakers of other language, to learn is as fast as possible, or at least the proverbs first, as compiled into a book by Digna Lacle. □



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Beauty On The Beach

Anna Maria Carusone

She is from Casurta, a town close to Napoli, in Italy. It is her first time in Aruba and she is on her honeymoon.





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NFL Capsules

Manning's 5 TDs lead Broncos past Chiefs

The Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP) — Peyton Manning

threw for 403 yards and five touchdowns, four to Eric Decker, as the Denver Broncos held off a furious rally to beat the Kansas City Chiefs 35-28 Sunday and seize control of the American Football Conference West.

Decker had eight catches for a career-high 174 yards for the Broncos (10-2), who moved a game clear of the Chiefs (9-3) in the division. With four games left, Denver also holds the tie-breaker by virtue of two wins over Kansas City in the last three weeks.

Jamaal Charles had 93 yards rushing for the Chiefs, and capped a 17-play drive with a 1-yard touchdown run with 6:32 left in the game to close within a touchdown.

After forcing a punt with 3:32 remaining, Kansas City used three long pass plays to move deep into



Denver Broncos wide receiver Eric Decker (87) makes a touchdown reception against Kansas City Chiefs cornerback Brandon Flowers (24) during the second half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 1, 2013, in Kansas City, Mo.

Associated Press

Florida State defeated Florida 37-7. Florida St is 1, Ohio St 2, Auburn 3 in AP poll

By **RALPH D. RUSSO**

AP College Football Writer

NEW YORK (AP) -- Florida State is the new No. 1 in The Associated Press college football poll, followed by Ohio State at No. 2 and No. 3 Auburn, which shook up the national title race by upsetting Alabama.

The Crimson Tide had been No. 1 since the preseason as it pursued a third consecutive national championship. But Alabama was stunned at Auburn on Saturday, losing 34-28 on the last play of the game.

That cleared the way for the Seminoles to be No. 1 for the first time since Oct. 1, 2000, the season after their last national title. Florida State received 58 first-place votes Sunday. Auburn got two.

Ohio State received 1,418 points, while Auburn had 1,387. Alabama fell to No. 4. No. 5 Missouri will play Auburn for the Southeastern Conference title. □



Florida State quarterback Jameis Winston (5) passes the ball as his offensive line goes to work on Florida during the first half of an NCAA college football game Saturday, Nov. 30, 2013 in Gainesville, Fla.

Associated Press

Broncos territory. But Alex Smith's pass to Dwayne Bowe in the end zone on fourth-and-4 with 1:45 left fell incomplete. **PANTHERS 27, BUCCANEERS 6**

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (AP) — Cam Newton threw for 263 yards and two touchdowns and ran for another score, as the Panthers earned a club-record eighth straight regular-season victory.

Newton threw touchdown passes to Brandon LaFell and Ted Ginn Jr. and "Superman" leaped over the pile for another score as the Panthers (9-3) out-gained the Buccaneers 426-206.

Continued on page 20

Lindell-Vikarby wins GS ahead of Shiffrin

PAT GRAHAM

AP Sports Writer

BEAVER CREEK, Colorado (AP) — Jessica Lindell-Vikarby won a World Cup giant slalom Sunday, holding off the 18-year-old Mikaela Shiffrin with a fluid final run. The Swede finished the two runs on a demanding Beaver Creek course in 2 minutes, 17.92 seconds, with Shiffrin 0.09 seconds behind. Tina Weirather of Liechtenstein took third. Shiffrin was spurred on by a frenzied home crowd, but all the noise down low didn't appear to rattle Lindell-Vikarby, who won a World Cup race for the first time since 2009.

"I tried to stay focus and do my own run," she said. "I can't do anything else than just ski."

There was not a trace of disappointment from Shiffrin, though. She was quite pleased with her first top-three finish in the event.

After all, Shiffrin is a slalom specialist who just recently started working on improving her giant slalom technique. Being this quick, this fast was something she didn't expect, even if it is her favorite hill, with her home about 10 minutes away.

Her solid performance salvaged an otherwise forgettable weekend for the Americans as the team struggled at Beaver Creek. "I followed through with my plan. I really just wanted to go out and ski as well as I could today," Shiffrin said. "I'm really happy with how today went."

The teenager was accorded the Lindsey Vonn treatment by the large crowd. They cheered the skier from nearby Eagle-Vail by ringing bells and holding up signs with her picture on it. Shiffrin could very well be the face of the Sochi Games for the U.S., especially with Vonn trying to come back from a right knee injury following a recent crash in training.

This was a difficult course,

too, with Lara Gut of Switzerland struggling and failing to finish the first run. Gut won the downhill and super-G the last two days. "Of course, I'm a bit angry after today," Gut said. "But it's even better than I could've imagined."

Shiffrin placed sixth in the GS in Soelden, Austria, for her best World cup result in the event. But she knew she could ski better.

This time, she went for it. After finishing her run, Shiffrin pumped her fist in the air, then took off her ski, pumping that in the air, too.

With only Lindell-Vikarby left, a win looked very possible.

It wasn't to be. Not on this day.

In between runs, Shiffrin actually looked at video of Lindell-Vikarby's run and had a feeling she was going to throw down another fast one.

"I knew that going out of the gate had to give it my all," Shiffrin said.

In the week leading to the race, Shiffrin kept a low profile. But she couldn't avoid the spotlight after Sunday, not after this kind of performance. Little kids lined the fence begging for her autograph. Shiffrin happily obliged.

"It's awesome to be here, feel the crowd and see everybody so excited about skiing," Shiffrin said.

After winning the World Cup overall slalom title last season, Shiffrin decided to branch out over the off-season and work on her GS.

"My only expectation is to ski as well as I can," Shiffrin said. "Try to put my training into the races. The biggest bummer is coming down in a race and thinking that I left something on the hill. I'm trying to not do that — ever."

No reason to fear that at Beaver Creek.

"She's a phenom," said Bill Marolt, the president and CEO of U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association. "She has the athletic ability,

the mental tenacity to do what she's done and will continue to do."

It wasn't a stellar weekend for Julia Mancuso or the rest of the U.S. skiers. They couldn't gain traction on their home hill. Apart from Shiffrin, no American finished in the top 10.

"When things are going fast, it feels easy. When things are going bad, you feel like you want to give up," Mancuso said.



Sweden's Jessica Lindell-Vikarby, center, raises her arms on the podium after winning the women's World Cup giant slalom skiing event, in Beaver Creek, Colo., Sunday, Dec. 1, 2013. Mikaela Shiffrin, left, finished second. Liechtenstein's Tina Weirather, right, finished third.



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Minnesota Vikings running back Adrian Peterson, left, tries to break a tackle from Chicago Bears free safety Chris Conte during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game on Sunday, Dec. 1, 2013, in Minneapolis. The Vikings won 23-20 in overtime.
Associated Press

NFL Capsules

Continued from page 18

The Carolina victory sets up a huge showdown next Sunday night with New Orleans with first place in the NFC South on the line. Newton ran for 68 yards and overcame two interceptions. The third-year quarterback has thrown for 13 touchdown passes and run for five scores during the Panthers' current win streak. Carolina's defense came in allowing the fewest points in the league and flexed its muscles again, forcing two turnovers and

sacking rookie Mike Glennon four times to snap a three-game winning streak for Tampa Bay (3-9). Glennon had thrown a touchdown pass in an NFL record eight straight games to start his career. BENGALS 17, CHARGERS 10 SAN DIEGO (AP) — Andy Dalton threw a go-ahead, 21-yard touchdown pass to wide-open A.J. Green late in the third quarter as the AFC North-leading Bengals (8-4), coming off their bye, kept a two-game lead over Baltimore. San Diego (5-7) lost the momentum it gained with a thrilling comeback win at Kansas City a week earlier and saw its playoff hopes dwindle after its fourth loss in five games. With the score tied at 7, the Bengals got the ball after Dre Kirkpatrick ripped it away from tight end Antonio Gates after a reception at the Cincinnati 25, the Chargers' third turnover. Ten plays later, Green split the defense for an easy touchdown, with safety Eric Weddle and cornerback Marcus Gilchrist only able to watch. EAGLES 24, CARDINALS 21 PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Nick Foles threw three touchdown passes and the Eagles held on. Zach Ertz had two TD catches, LeSean McCoy ran for 79 yards as the Eagles (7-5) won their fourth straight to remain tied with Dallas for first place in the NFC East. Carson Palmer threw for 302 yards and three TD passes, but also had two interceptions and lost a fumble as the Cardinals (7-5) had their four-game winning streak snapped. Foles picked up where he left off in November, when he was the NFC's Player of the Month and tied an NFL record with seven TDs in a game. Foles finished 21 of 34 for 237 yards against a defense ranked eighth. Foles set a team record for most passes without an interception (233), breaking

Michael Vick's mark of 224 set in 2010. He also moved within one TD pass of tying Peyton Manning's mark of 20 and zero interceptions to start a season. PATRIOTS 34, TEXANS 31 HOUSTON (AP) — Tom Brady threw for 371 yards and two scores, and Stephen Gostkowski made two long field goals in the fourth quarter. The Texans' franchise-record skid reached 10 games. Gary Kubiak coached from the sideline for the first time since suffering a mini-stroke Nov. 3. He missed one game before working the last two games from the booth. New England overcame a 24-point first-half deficit last week to beat the Broncos 34-31 in overtime. The Patriots (9-3) trailed by 10 at halftime in this one and the lead changed five times in a wild second half. Ben Tate ran for 102 yards and three touchdowns for the Texans (2-10), who haven't won since Sept. 15. It was the first 100-yard rushing game since 2011 for Tate, who has been slowed since Oct. 20 with four broken ribs. The victory ended a three-game road skid for the Patriots, who have won 16 of their last 17 December games. COLTS 22, TITANS 14 INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Adam Vinatieri equaled his career high with five field goals, including a 49-yarder to give the Colts the lead for good late in the third quarter. Surprise starter Donald Brown scored on a 4-yard touchdown run with 1:56 left, giving Indianapolis (8-4) a three-game lead in the AFC South with four to play. It owns the first tiebreaker thanks to a season sweep of the Titans (5-7). Vinatieri, who will be 41 later this month, bailed out the Colts, also tying his career high for field goals in a half (four) and equaling Jason Elam's NFL record for 100-point seasons (16). □



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Rory McIlroy wins Australian Open

SYDNEY (AP) — Rory McIlroy birdied the 18th hole to snatch victory from Adam Scott at the Australian Open on Sunday, winning for the first time in 2013 and denying Scott the rare Australian triple crown.

McIlroy started the last round four shots behind Scott but drew level when he eagled the seventh and birdied the eighth.

Scott went a shot ahead with a birdie at the ninth then the pair went shot for shot over the back nine before the tournament's dramatic climax on the final hole.

Scott's approach shot went over the back of the green and his resultant chip went well past the hole, with two putts bringing a bogey. McIlroy hit his approach to 10 feet and sank the putt to claim victory by a shot and end his long wait for a trophy.

"I wanted to get a win and finally I've been able to get one," McIlroy said. "But more satisfying than that is being able to take one of the best players in the world down the stretch and come out on top. "Adam is a phenomenal golfer, a great competitor and probably an even better guy and I feel a bit sorry that I was the one that ruined the triple crown for him."

Scott was attempting to be only the second player after compatriot Robert Allenby in 2005 to win Australia's triple crown by claiming the Australian Open, Masters and PGA titles in the same season.

He carried his form from the Masters and PGA tournaments into the Open, shattering the course record with a 10-under par 62 in his opening round.



Rory MacIlroy of Northern Ireland holds up the Stonehaven Cup after winning the Australian Open golf tournament in Sydney Sunday, Dec. 1, 2013. MacIlroy defeated Australia's Adam Scott by one stroke finishing 18-under par.

Associated Press

He came into the final day at 16-under par, with rounds of 62, 70 and 68, four shots ahead of McIlroy who was a further four shots ahead of the next challenger.

That effectively made Sunday's final round a shootout between the No. 2-ranked Scott and North-

ern Ireland's McIlroy, who was the world's top-ranked player last year.

Scott was left to rue a series of missed birdie opportunities, failing to hole six putts from within 12 feet during his final round.

"Nothing was going my way on the greens today,"

Scott said. "I could have put this thing away early on if the putter was behaving how it should have, how it did the rest of the week."

Both players took irons from the tee on the last hole and landed their shots adjacent to each other on the fairway.

Scott's approach landed ahead of the hole but a cruel bounce sent the ball flying through the back of the green.

Rather than pitch and run back onto the green, Scott chose to give his chip some loft. It failed to pull up, rolling onto the lower tier of the green and the local favorite did well to salvage a bogey. McIlroy stood assessing his ten foot putt during Scott's excursions, and after Scott holed out, McIlroy rolled in a slow putt that just made it to the hole. "I didn't think it was going to unfold the way it did," McIlroy said. "It's hard not to feel some guilt in the way I won it."

"Having a one-shot lead going into the last having it taken away from you right at the very end, it's tough." McIlroy finished with an 18-under par tally of 270, a shot ahead of Scott who was a further six shots ahead of Australian John Senden at 11 under.

Senden and compatriots Bryden MacPherson and Rhein Gibson, who tied for fourth at 9-under, all qualified for next year's British Open. □

Rookie Matsuyama wins Japan Tour money title

KOCHI, Japan (AP) — Hideki Matsuyama became the first rookie to claim the Japanese tour's money title on Sunday with a win at the Casio World Open. Matsuyama shot a 70 in the final round at Kochi Kuroshio Country Club to finish at 12-under 276, one stroke ahead of Yuta Ikeda.

The 21-year-old university student received \$390,000 for Sunday's win, bringing

his earnings this season to slightly more than \$2 million.

Matsuyama turned pro in April and has won five tournaments on the Japanese tour this season. In seven PGA Tour-sanctioned events, Matsuyama has six top-25 finishes. He plans to compete on the PGA Tour in 2014. □

Japan's Hideki Matsuyama poses with his trophy for photos after winning the Casio World Open golf tournament at Kochi Kuroshio Country Club in Kochi, western Japan, Sunday, Dec. 1, 2013.

Associated Press



Pacers 16-1 after 105-100 win over Clippers

By **JOE RESNICK**

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Despite having the NBA's best record, the Indiana Pacers realize there's always room for improvement.

David West scored 14 of his 24 points in the third quarter and grabbed 12 rebounds, Paul George had 27 points, and the Pacers improved their best start in franchise history to 16-1 on Sunday with a 105-100 victory that snapped the Los Angeles Clippers' four-game winning streak.

"We can become a lot better. We're still nowhere close to where we want to be offensively, and that's the next step for us," George said. "The defense is clicking well, the transition defense is clicking well, and we're playing like a team. This was a great win for us. We knew coming in that it was going to be a hard-fought game."

Jamal Crawford led the Clippers with 20 points - the 10th time this season that a Pacers opponent didn't have anyone with more than 20. Chris Paul had 17

points and 10 rebounds, while Blake Griffin scored 16 and pulled down 12 rebounds, equaling teammate DeAndre Jordan's total.

"We're always up for a challenge, and we had a good one today," said center Roy Hibbert, who helped fuel the Pacers' seventh straight win with 19 points. But we have a lot more work to do. We don't worry about swagger. We're just five individuals out there on the court playing together."

The defending Pacific Division champion Clippers played their first game since finding out that J.J. Redick will be sidelined six to eight weeks because of a broken bone in his shooting hand and a ligament tear in his right elbow.

Redick will be re-evaluated on Monday by hand specialist Dr. Steve Shin to determine what further course of treatment will be necessary. His injuries, which occurred in Friday night's 104-98 overtime win at Sacramento, complicated things even more for



Indiana Pacers forward David West, right, puts up a shot as Los Angeles Clippers center DeAndre Jordan defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Dec. 1, 2013, in Los Angeles.

the Clippers with reserve forward Matt Barnes missing his sixth straight game due to an eye injury.

"The ligament looks intact, so they shouldn't have to operate on that," Redick said. "It's just the fragments of the bone. It's still swollen and there's some pain there. It's frustrating, because I have enjoyed those 17 games immensely."

Los Angeles used the same starting lineup in each of its first 16 games before Paul sat out Friday's game with a right hamstring strain. Rivers opted to continue using Jamal Crawford off the bench despite his 31-point outing at Sacramento, so Willie Green started in Redick's place and scored only two points in 15 minutes.

West capped a 13-3 run with an 18-footer and two free throws to give the Pacers their biggest lead, 74-60, with 4:48 left in the third. Los Angeles closed to 93-89 on Jordan's dunk off an alley-oop lob from backup point guard Darren Collison with 7:12 to play. □



In this Aug. 10, 2013 file photo, New York Yankees' Phil Hughes delivers a pitch during the first inning of a baseball game against the Detroit Tigers Saturday in New York.

Associated Press

By **JON KRAWCZYNSKI**

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Phil Hughes probably needed to leave hitter-friendly Yankee Stadium, and the Minnesota Twins were desperate for proven arms to strengthen a woeful rotation. The two parties have come together, hoping to help each other out.

Related Stories

The Twins and Hughes

agreed to a \$24 million, three-year deal, a person with knowledge of the agreement told The Associated Press. The person requested anonymity because Hughes still has to pass a physical before the contract can become official. The Star Tribune of Minneapolis first reported the deal.

Hughes went 4-14 with a

AP source: Twins, Phil Hughes agree to 3-year deal

5.19 ERA last season for the New York Yankees. He was 1-10 with a 6.32 ERA at Yankee Stadium though, so a move to pitcher-friendly Target Field could be exactly what the 27-year-old needs to jumpstart his career.

He was an All-Star in 2010 when he went 18-8 with a 4.19 ERA and was shaping up as a building block for the Yankees' rotation. Hughes was a former first-round draft pick and a once coveted young pitcher by many teams. Among them was the Twins, who had discussions with the Yankees about Hughes headlining a package for ace Johan Santana after the 2007 season.

The Yankees eventually pulled out of the talks, in part because of how highly they thought of Hughes,

and the Twins sent Santana to the Mets.

But Hughes developed shoulder problems in 2011 that limited him to 17 starts and has been underwhelming the past two seasons while also dealing with back problems. Hughes has made 61 starts in the past two years, and Twins hope that getting him into spacious Target Field could help him stabilize one of the worst pitching staffs in the majors.

The Twins have lost at least 96 games in each of the last three seasons, mostly because of their starting pitching. Last year, their starters had an MLB-worst ERA of 5.26. Toronto was the next worse at 4.81. Only two of their starters had ERAs under 5.00, with Samuel Deduno's 3.83 leading the way and Kevin Correia

next at 4.18.

Upgrading the rotation was by far the biggest priority for the team entering this winter, and the Twins have plunged into the task with uncharacteristic free-spending verve. They kicked things off by agreeing to terms with Los Angeles Dodgers right-hander Ricky Nolasco on a \$49 million, four-year contract last week.

They have now committed \$73 million on Hughes and Nolasco, the two biggest contracts the franchise has given to players outside the organization.

And the Twins may not be done. They have been in discussions to retain veteran Mike Pelfrey while looking at other free agents, including Bronson Arroyo and Matt Garza. □



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China claims victory in scrubbing Internet clean

DIDI TANG

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — The Chinese government has declared victory in cleaning up what it considers rumors, negativity and unruliness from online discourse, while critics say the moves have suppressed criticism of the government and ruling Communist Party.

Beijing launched the campaign this summer, arresting dozens of people for spreading rumors, creating new penalties for people who post libelous information and calling in the country's top bloggers for talks urging them to guard the national interest and uphold social order. At the same time, government agencies at all levels have boosted their online presence to control the message in cyberspace.

"If we should describe the online environment in the past as good mingling with the bad, the sky of the cyberspace has cleared up now because we have cracked down on online rumors," Ren Xianliang, vice minister of the State Internet Information Office, said during a rare meeting this week with foreign journalists. A study by an Internet opinion monitoring service under the party-owned People's Daily newspaper showed the number of posts by a sample of 100 opinion leaders declined by nearly 25 percent and were overtaken by posts from government microblog accounts.

"The positive force on the Internet has preliminarily taken back the microphone, and the positive energy has overwhelmed the negative energy to uphold the online justice," said Zhu Huaxin, the monitoring service's general secretary,

according to a transcript posted by state media. Observers say the crackdown has noticeably curtailed speech by suppressing voices and triggering self-censorship, with more liberal online voices being more ginger in their criticism and posting significantly less.

Even Zhu suggested the

the public to let off steam. "If there's no channel for the public to express themselves, they may take to the street," said historian and political analyst Zhang Lifan, whose online accounts were recently removed without warning — possibly because he had shared historic facts that the party did not find flattering.

plauded the technology as a strong boost to their cause.

As of June this year, China's microblogging services had more than 330 million users, and WeChat, a mobile phone-based instant messaging service that allows users to share information with circles of friends or subscribers, had more than

ditional 20 to 30 percent of the users will not speak."

Authorities in recent months have been arresting microbloggers on the charge of spreading rumors or disrupting the public order, including a teenager boy who raised some questions over a murder case online. Many intellectuals, writers, and journalists have seen their blogging and microblogging accounts removed altogether. A Chinese-American businessman with a strong online following was arrested for soliciting prostitutes and paraded on state television in a campaign to discredit him. Chinese propaganda officials have always seen the media — new or old — as a crucial tool to support state rule and are wary of cacophony.

"The ecosystem for public opinion online has noticeably improved, and that has created a good environment conducive to the overall work of the party of the government," Ren said, in touting the benefits of well-managed public discourse. But the historian Zhang said Beijing has failed to play by rules when it shut down critical but law-abiding microblogging accounts. "They see critics as opponents," Zhang said. "That's a stupid thing to do." Despite claiming preliminary success in taking control of the Internet, Beijing is likely to roll out more regulations. In a guiding document for the next five or even 10 years, China's senior leaders have mandated that the state must set the perimeters and the tone for online opinion with "positive guidance" and "management" and that the state should "standardize" how online communication unfolds. □



In this Monday, Aug. 19, 2013 file photo, computer users sit near a display with a message from the Chinese police on the proper use of the internet at an internet cafe in Beijing, China.

Associated Press

campaign might have gone too far. In one example, Web users refrained from reposting information and commenting on the government response to a severe flood in the eastern city of Yuyao in early October. A year ago, they were garrulous in questioning Beijing's drainage system when a rainstorm ravaged the city. "It is a reminder that we must strike a balance between crushing online rumors and ensuring information flow," Zhu said. Some critics say the moves may backfire by eliminating an effective conduit for

"The governments also can take pulse of the public opinion, but if no one speaks up, they will be in darkness," Zhang said. "It is so odd they are covering up their eyes and blocking their ears."

The rise of the Internet in China has always been followed by Beijing's efforts to rein it in, and the latest challenge has been the explosive growth in social media, particularly microblogging, which has allowed users to share firsthand accounts and opinions with great speed. Advocates of free speech have ap-

300 million users, Ren said.

"The unexpected growth has caught people by surprise," Ren said.

Chen Ziming, a Beijing-based political analyst, said Beijing's apparent success in grabbing control of social media is a big setback for free speech.

"They have always been able to control newspapers, radios and TV stations, but there have been some holes in the Internet, and the microblogging was the last hole," Chen said. "They have achieved their goal. When 10 percent of the accounts are banned, ad-

Mexico's booming car industry selling unsafe cars

ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON

Associated Press

RAMOS ARIZPE, Mexico (AP) — In Mexico's booming auto industry, the cars rolling off assembly lines may look identical, but how safe they are depends on where they're headed.

Vehicles destined to stay in Mexico or go south to the rest of Latin America carry a code signifying there's no need for antilock braking systems, electronic stability control, or more than two air bags, if any, in its basic models.

If the cars will be exported to the United States or Europe, however, they must meet stringent safety laws, including as many as six to 10 air bags, and stability controls that compensate for slippery roads and other road dangers, say engineers who have worked in Mexico-based auto factories.

Because the price of the two versions of the cars is about the same, the dual system buttresses the bottom lines of automakers such as General Motors and Nissan.

But it's being blamed for a surge in auto-related fatalities in Mexico, where laws require virtually no safety protections.

"We are paying for cars that are far more expensive and far less safe," said Alejandro Furas, technical director for Global New Car Assessment Program, or NCAP, a vehicle crash-test group. "Something is very wrong."

In 2011, nearly 5,000 drivers and passengers in Mexico died in accidents, a 58 percent increase since 2001, according to the latest available data from the country's transportation department. Over the same decade, the U.S. reduced the number of auto-related fatalities by 40 percent. The death rate in Mexico, when comparing fatalities with the size of the car fleet, is more than 3.5 times that of the U.S.

Nevertheless, Mexico hasn't introduced any safety proposals other than general seat belt requirements for its 22-mil-



In this image taken from a March 2013 video released by independent crash-test group Latin NCAP on Nov. 27, 2013, a Nissan model Tsuru vehicle with no airbags is crash-tested at Latin NCAP's facilities in Landsberg am Lech, Germany.

Associated Press

lion strong auto fleet. Even then, the laws don't mandate three-point shoulder belts necessary to secure child safety seats.

Brazil and Argentina, on the other hand, have passed laws requiring all vehicles to have dual front air bags and antilock braking systems by next year.

An Associated Press investigation this year found that Brazil's auto plants produce cars aimed at Latin American consumers that lack basic safety features. Like Brazil, Mexico doesn't run its own crash test facility to rank cars' safety before they hit the road.

Dr. Arturo Cervantes Trejo, director of the Mexican Health Ministry's National Accident Prevention Council, said the country has a long way to go to upgrade safety standards, but challenging the nation's \$30 billion auto industry could be difficult.

"It's a complicated subject because of the amount of money carmakers bring to this country. The economy protects them," Cervantes told the AP. "But there are plans, there is a strategy. We have a working group with the car industry."

Auto plants cover a swath of central Mexico, cranking out about 3 million cars a year while lifting into the middle class auto hubs in the states of Aguascalientes and Puebla. In a matter of a few years,

Mexico has become the world's fourth biggest auto exporter, despite having no homegrown brands, and the country's car fleet doubled between 2001 and 2011, the latest national figures show. In fact, con-

sumers in "first-world" countries are paying the same or even less for safer cars.

For example, basic versions of Mexico's second most popular car, the Nissan Versa, made in central Aguascalientes, come with

two air bags, but without electronic stability control systems, which use sensors to activate brakes when a car loses control.

The sticker price of the newer generation of the sedan comes to \$16,000. The U.S. version of the same car has six air bags in the front, on the sides and mounted in the roof, in addition to an electronic stability control system. That sticker price is about \$14,000.

Similarly, the basic version of the Chevrolet Aveo, which has been revamped and renamed Sonic, sells for about \$14,000 in the U.S. and comes with 10 air bags, antilock brakes and traction control. Its Mexican equivalent, the country's top-selling car, doesn't have any of those protections and costs only \$400 less.

Nissan Mexicana spokesman Herman Morfin said in a statement it is "common practice" to add different features, depending on the intended market.

"Because there are many choices of specifications and equipment, specific marketing strategies by country, in addition to the tax difference among countries, states and cities, also including transportation and delivery costs, it's not possible to make a direct comparison among vehicles sold in each market, based on the list price published on the Web," Morfin said.

Morfin said two of Nissan's most popular models — the Versa and the Sentra — are packaged with two air bags and an antilock braking system, which is more than what's required by the Mexican government.

While GM declined repeated requests to comment, an engineer who headed a manufacturing division at the company in Mexico until last year said the company saved on costs by not adding safety features. "For the company to make more net profit and so that cars are sold at more affordable prices, we would toss aside some accessories. □



In this Nov. 22, 2013 photo, commuters drive on a main thoroughfare in Mexico City.

Associated Press



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Record crowds over weekend, but spending declined

ANNE D'INNOCENZIO

AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Did U.S. retailers shoot themselves in the foot?

Target, Macy's and other retailers offered holiday discounts in early November and opened stores on Thanksgiving Day. It was an effort to attract shoppers before Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving that traditionally kicks off the holiday shopping season. Those tactics drew bigger crowds, but failed to motivate Americans to spend. A record 141 million people are expected to shop in stores and online over the four-day Thanksgiving weekend that ends Sunday, up from last year's 137 million, according to the results of a survey of nearly 4,500 shoppers conducted for The National Retail Federation. But total spending is expected to fall for the first time ever since the trade group began tracking it in 2006, according to the survey that was released on Sunday. Over the four days, spending fell an estimated 2.9 percent to \$57.4 billion.

The survey underscores the challenges stores have

faced since the recession began in late 2007. Retailers had to offer deep discounts to get people to shop during the downturn, but Americans still expect those "70 percent off" signs now during the uneven economic recovery. Stores may have only exacerbated that expectation this year. By offering bargains earlier in the season, it seems they've created a vicious cycle in which they'll need to constantly offer bigger sales to get people to spend. That's because shoppers who took advantage of "holiday" deals before Thanksgiving may have deal fatigue and are cautious about buying anything else unless it's heavily discounted.

"The economy spoke loud and clear over the past few days," said Brian Sozzi, CEO and chief equities strategist at Belus Capital Advisors. "We are going to see an increase in mark-downs." Matthew Shay, president and CEO of The National Retail Federation, said that the survey results only represent one extended weekend in what is typically the biggest shopping period of the year.



Eager shoppers crowd the entrance as they pour into the Macy's Herald Square flagship store, Thursday, Nov. 28, 2013, in New York.

Associated Press

The combined months of November and December can account for up to 40 percent of retailers' revenue. Overall, Shay said the trade group still expects sales for the combined two months to increase 3.9 percent to \$602.1 billion. That's higher than the 3.5 percent pace in the previous year.

But to achieve that growth,

retailers will likely have to offer big sales events. In a stronger economy, people who shopped early would continue to do so throughout the season. But analysts say that's not likely to be the case in this still tough economic climate.

"It's pretty clear that in the current environment, customers expect promotions," Shay said. "Absent promotions, they're not really spending."

Take Tuesday Trasvina, 37, who said she's been bombarded with holiday discounts since early November. Trasvina, a marketing coordinator, plans to spend \$500 on holiday gifts, about a quarter of what she spent last year.

"They've been stretching out this Black Friday thing so long," said Trasvina, who was shopping with her husband on Friday at a Target store in Portland, Oregon. "I just think the over-commercialization of the holiday has gotten to us."

At least a dozen major re-

tailers — most of them for the first time — opened on Thanksgiving instead of on Black Friday, which is typically the biggest shopping day of the year. Wal-Mart, Toys R Us and other retailers said on Friday that Thanksgiving crowds were strong. But the early start appeared to pull sales forward. Black Friday sales fell 13.2 percent from the previous year to \$9.74 billion, according to Chicago-based technology firm ShopperTrak. But combined spending over Thanksgiving and Black Friday rose 2.3 percent to \$12.3 billion compared with a year ago.

A Kmart store in New York City that opened at 6 a.m. on Thanksgiving and stayed open for 41 hours straight was packed on the holiday. Clothing was marked down 30 percent to 50 percent.

Adriana Tavaraz, 51, headed there at about 4 p.m. and spent \$105 on ornaments, Santa hats and other holiday decor. □

Berlin startup factory targets peer lending market

BERLIN (AP) — Serial startup firm Rocket Internet is targeting the growing market for peer-to-peer lending with the launch of a new site in Germany.

Berlin-based Rocket Internet says the site called lendico.de will link up private lenders and consumers seeking loans of 1,000-25,000 euros (\$1,360-\$34,000).

The market for so-called peer-to-peer loans has grown rapidly in recent years with sites such as Prosper.com and Zopa.com among the biggest incumbents.

Lendico said Sunday that interest rates on loans would start at 2.99 percent. That is about half the typical rate of consumer loans in Germany, Europe's big-

gest economy.

Spokesman Lukas Jaworski says the company aims to expand to other European countries next year.

Privately-held Rocket Internet specializes in copying successful business ideas. Its portfolio includes more than 75 companies with over 25,000 employees worldwide. □

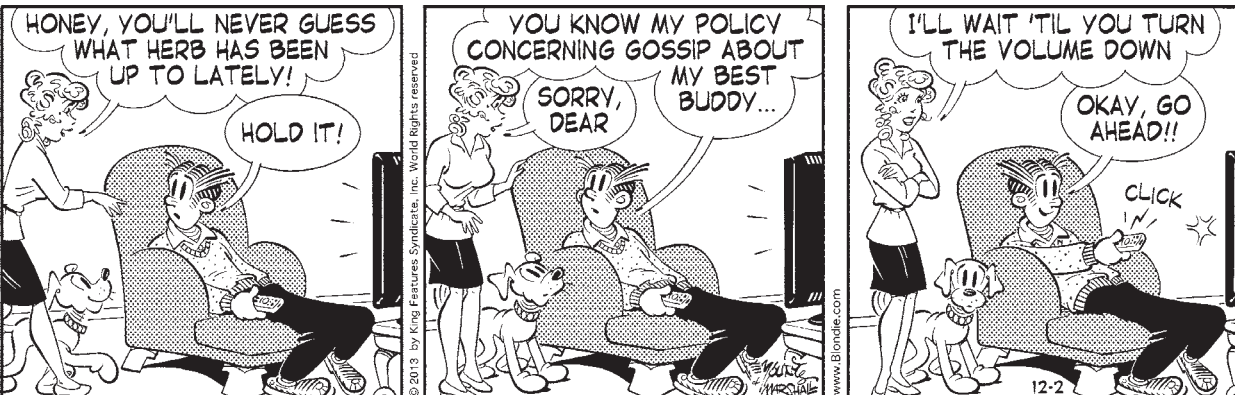
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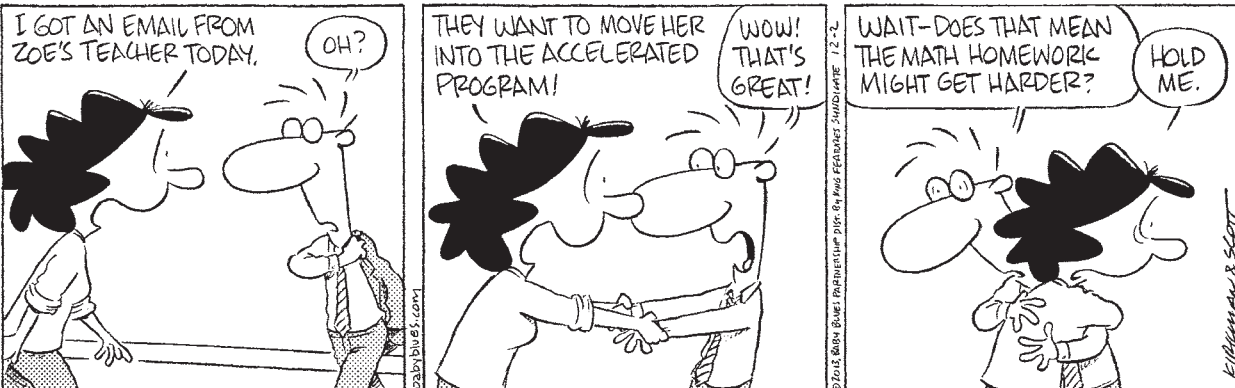
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

			2	4	1	9	7		
				7	8	5			
4									5
8	6							5	2
5	4			7				3	8
2	3							1	7
1									3
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Difficulty Level ★

12/02

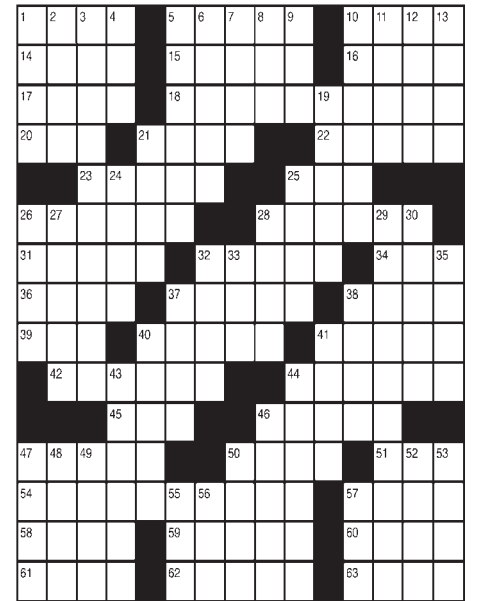
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer

7	8	2	3	1	4	6	5	9
3	6	1	8	9	5	7	2	4
5	4	9	2	6	7	1	3	8
8	2	5	9	4	1	3	6	7
6	7	4	5	8	3	9	1	2
1	9	3	6	7	2	4	8	5
9	3	6	7	5	8	2	4	1
4	5	7	1	2	6	8	9	3
2	1	8	4	3	9	5	7	6

ACROSS

- Duplicate
- Perfects a skill
- Puncture
- TV's Perlman
- Rental car company
- Zero
- Pig's comment
- Rejected as untrue
- Portable bed
- Plum variety
- Distorts
- Sooty residue
- Actress West
- Respect highly
- Fall or summer
- ___ of time; early
- Purple shade
- ___ sauce; teriyaki juice
- Sightseeing trip
- 24 ___ gold
- High point
- 1/60 of a min.
- Summary
- Actor ___ Keith
- Sacred place where a saint is honored
- Comic W.C. ___
- Golfer Ernie ___
- Went ___; was spread quickly via YouTube
- Social blunder
- James ___; 007
- Ms. MacGraw
- Draw pictures, as for a book
- Night twinkler
- ___ tire; driver's woe
- Refueling ship
- ___ up; become cheerful again
- Toddler
- ___ board; nail file
- ___ for; requests



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

12/13

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

LAY	SCRAM	PADS
OWES	TOILE	UTAH
BEAM	ROPES	LONE
SHAMELESS	SPED	
SOWS	HIE	
BRAHMS	TRANSFER	
RILES	CAULK	LEE
AVID	NOBEL	HORA
CAB	HEALS	RAPID
ELIGIBLE	MISSES	
APR	COMB	
CRAB	ADNAUSEAM	
HUGO	SEARS	EVER
USER	KATES	NOSH
MESS	AROSE	WHO

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12/13

DOWN

- Swamp critter, for short
- "The Buckeye State"
- Cravings
- Mattel's boy dolls
- Zone
- Irritates
- Crow or canary
- Prove false
- Fancy clothes
- Ballot caster
- Present
- Supporter
- Noisy criticism
- Bundle of hay
- Songbird
- Annoys
- Foot digit
- Curved edge
- Jacuzzi

Poll: Americans don't trust one another

CONNIE CASS

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Americans don't trust each other anymore.

We're not talking about the loss of faith in big institutions such as the government, the church or Wall Street, which fluctuates with events. For four decades, a gut-level ingredient of democracy — trust in the other fellow — has been quietly draining away.

These days, only one-third of Americans say most people can be trusted. Half felt that way in 1972, when the General Social Survey first asked the question.

Forty years later, a record high of nearly two-thirds say "you can't be too careful" in dealing with people.

An AP-GfK poll conducted last month found that Americans are suspicious of each other in everyday encounters. Less than one-third expressed a lot of trust in clerks who swipe their credit cards, drivers on the road, or people they meet when traveling.

"I'm leery of everybody," said Bart Murawski, 27, of Albany, New York. "Caution is always a factor."

Does it matter that Americans are suspicious of one another? Yes, say worried political and social scientists. What's known as "social trust" brings good things. A society where it's easier to compromise or make a deal. Where people are willing to work with those who are different from them for the common good. Where trust appears to promote economic growth. Distrust, on the other hand, seems to encourage corruption. At the least, it diverts energy to counting change, drawing up 100-page legal contracts and building gated

communities.

Even the rancor and gridlock in politics might stem from the effects of an increasingly distrustful citizenry, said April K. Clark, a Purdue University political scientist and public opinion researcher.

"It's like the rules of the game," Clark said. "When trust is low, the way we react and behave with each other becomes less civil." There's no easy fix.

In fact, some studies suggest it's too late for most Americans alive today to become more trusting. That research says the basis for a person's lifetime trust levels is set by his or her mid-twenties and unlikely to change, other than in some unifying crucible such as a world war.

People do get a little more trusting as they age. But beginning with the baby boomers, each generation has started off adulthood less trusting than those who came before them.

The best hope for creating a more trusting nation may be figuring out how to inspire today's youth, perhaps united by their high-tech gadgets, to trust the way previous generations did in simpler times.

There are still trusters around to set an example. Pennsylvania farmer Dennis Hess is one. He runs an unattended farm stand on the honor system.

Customers select their produce, tally their bills and drop the money into a slot, making change from an unlocked cashbox. Both regulars and tourists en route to nearby Lititz, Pennsylvania, stop for asparagus in the spring, corn in the summer and, as the weather turns cold, long-neck pumpkins for holiday pies. □



Bart Murawski, 27 poses at a coffee shop Tuesday, Nov. 26, 2013, in Troy, N.Y. You can take our word for it: Americans don't trust each other anymore.

Associated Press



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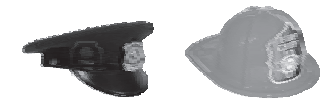
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Indian craft leaves Earth's orbit on way to Mars

ASHOK SHARMA

Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India's Mars orbiter mission left Earth's sphere of influence early Sunday after performing a maneuver to put it on its way to orbit the red planet.

The spacecraft fired its main engine for more than 20 minutes to reach the correct velocity to leave the Earth's orbit, the Bangalore-based Indian Space Research Organization said.

"The Earth orbiting phase of the spacecraft ended. The spacecraft is now on a course to encounter Mars after a journey of about 10 months around the sun," the statement said.

It said that all systems on-board the spacecraft are performing normally.

India launched its first spacecraft bound for Mars on Nov. 5, a complex mission that it hopes will demonstrate and advance technologies for space travel.

The 1,350-kilogram (3,000-pound) orbiter Mangalyaan, which means "Mars craft" in Hindi, must travel 780 million kilometers (485 million miles) over 300 days to reach an orbit around Mars next September. If the mission is successful, India will become only the fourth space program to visit the red planet after the Soviet Union, the United States and Europe.

Some have questioned the \$72 million price tag for a country of 1.2 billion people still dealing with widespread hunger and poverty. But the government defended the Mars mission, and its \$1 billion space program in general, by noting its importance in providing high-tech jobs for scientists and engineers and practical



S. Arunan, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) scientist and project director of Mars Orbiter Mission, speaks to journalists at ISRO's Spacecraft Control Centre in Bangalore, India, Wednesday, Nov. 27, 2013.

Associated Press

cal applications in solving problems on Earth.

Decades of space research have allowed India to develop satellite, communications and remote sensing technologies that are helping to solve everyday problems at home, from forecasting where fish can be caught by fishermen to predicting storms and floods.

The orbiter will gather images and data that will help in determining how Martian weather systems work and what happened to the large quantities of water that are believed to have once existed on Mars.

It also will search Mars for methane, a key chemical in life processes that could

also come from geological processes. Experts say the data will improve understanding about how planets form, what conditions might make life possible

and where else in the universe it might exist.

The orbiter is expected to have at least six months to investigate the planet's landscape and atmo-

sphere. At its closest point, it will be 365 kilometers (227 miles) from the planet's surface, and its furthest point will be 80,000 kilometers (49,700 miles) away.

China launches its first moon rover mission



BEIJING (AP) — China has launched its first mission to land a rover on the moon that will transmit images and survey the moon's surface. The spacecraft is expected to land in mid-December.

The official Xinhua News Agency said a Long March-3B rocket carrying the Chang'e 3 lander blasted off Monday as scheduled at 1:30 a.m. from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China.

If the mission goes as planned, the Chang'e 3 will become China's first spacecraft to soft land on the surface of an extraterrestrial body.

The moon rover will survey the moon's geological structure and surface substances.

The Long March 3B rocket carrying the Chang'e-3 lunar probe blasts off from the launch pad at Xichang Satellite Launch Center, in southwest China's Sichuan Province on Monday, Dec. 2, 2013.

Associated Press

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'Catching Fire,' 'Frozen' break box office records

JESSICA HERNDON
AP Film Writer

"The Hunger Games: Catching Fire" and the 3-D animated musical "Frozen" dished up box office records over the Thanksgiving holiday.

Lionsgate's sequel earned a prodigious \$75 million in its second weekend, while Disney's frosty fete opened with \$67 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. Both films bested the previous Thanksgiving record holder, "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," which earned \$57.5 million in 2001 over a three-day period.

Snowballing its way to the top, "Frozen" became the biggest Thanksgiving opening ever and the largest opening for Walt Disney Animation Studios.

"For a company whose foundation was built on animation, to have this as the biggest opening ever is a

pretty extraordinary thing," said Dave Hollis, executive vice president of distribution at Walt Disney Studios, adding that the box office draw of "Frozen" exceeded studio expectations.

"We came into the week-end feeling like anything that would exceed the result from 'Tangled' from a couple years back would be great," Hollis added. "Tangled" opened with \$68.7 million in 2010. "We thought something in the \$70-\$80 million range is what might be possible with 'Frozen.' We are hoping it lends itself to a big, long payoff after this great start." The films topped records for the highest domestic box office grosses for the three-day and five-day holiday weekend. "Catching Fire" blazed the trail to No. 1 and "Frozen" slid in at No. 2. "Catching Fire" earned the biggest-ever gross for a film from

Wednesday to Sunday over the Thanksgiving holiday. It brought in \$110.2 million, raising its domestic total to \$297 million. "Frozen" scored \$93 million over the five days, topping Disney's previous five-day champ, "Toy Story 2," which earned \$80.1 million in 1999.

"All of these records being broken, it's like a true snowball effect," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box-office tracker Rentrak. "Overall, this is the biggest Thanksgiving weekend for the industry ever. Last year was the Thanksgiving record holder, but this one-two punch with 'Catching Fire' and 'Frozen' was just amazing."

Internationally, "Catching Fire" continued to bring the heat, earning a total of \$276 million through Sunday. Opening No. 1 in France, Italy and Belgium, the sequel exceeded the opening weekend of "The



This publicity photo released by Lionsgate shows Jennifer Lawrence, left, as Katniss Everdeen and Josh Hutcherson as Peeta Mellark in a scene from the film, "The Hunger Games: Catching Fire."

Associated Press

"Hunger Games" in all three markets. Overall, the sequel has grossed \$573 million worldwide.

After dominating the box office during its first two weeks in theaters, Disney's "Thor: The Dark World"

dropped to No. 2 last weekend and was knocked down one more spot to No. 3 this weekend, earning \$11.1 million. Globally, it continues to keep Disney on the map with a total of \$591.1 million. □

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Officials: Speed a factor in Paul Walker crash

**JAKE COYLE
JUSTIN PRITCHARD
Associated Press**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Fans of "Fast & Furious" star Paul Walker created a make-shift memorial Sunday at the site where a car he was riding in crashed, killing the actor and a friend.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department says speed was a factor in the one-car crash in the community of Valencia, about 30 miles (48 kilometers) northwest of downtown Los Angeles. Deputies found a 2005 red Porsche Carrera GT engulfed in flames when they arrived Saturday afternoon.

On Sunday, fans of Walker, 40, gathered to leave flowers, candles and memorabilia from the action film franchise.

Walker's publicist said Sunday that the other person in the car was Roger Rodas, a friend of Walker's who owned a sports car dealership in Valencia.

Ame Van Iden said the actor was the passenger, though the sheriff's department did not confirm that. The Porsche crashed into



First responders gather evidence near the wreckage of a Porsche sports car that crashed into a light pole on Hercules Street near Kelly Johnson Parkway in Valencia on Saturday, Nov. 30, 2013. A publicist for actor Paul Walker says the star of the "Fast & Furious" movie series has died in a car crash north of Los Angeles. He was 40. Ame Van Iden says Walker died Saturday afternoon. No further details were released.

a light pole and tree and burst into flames. The downed light pole had a speed limit sign of 45 mph (72 kph).

Sheriff's deputy Peter Gomez said investigators are working to determine how fast the car was travel-

ing and what caused it to go out of control, including whether the driver was distracted or something in the road prompted him to swerve.

Walker and Rodas had attended a fundraiser benefiting victims of the recent

typhoon in the Philippines. The event was held by Walker's Reach Out Worldwide, a charity he founded in 2010 to aid victims of natural disasters.

The fundraiser and toy drive took place at Rodas' custom car shop, Always

Associated Press

Evolving. Attendees rushed to the nearby crash to try to put out the flames with fire extinguishers.

Bill Townsend, who attended the event, told AP Radio that Walker appeared very happy at the fundraiser.

"He was smiling at everybody, just tickled that all these people came out to support this charity," Townsend said.

"He was doing what he loved. He was surrounded by friends, surrounded by cars."

The "Fast & Furious" star had been on break from shooting the seventh installment of the Universal Pictures franchise. Production began in September and while much of the film has been shot, it's incomplete. Universal has not yet said what it plans to do with "Fast & Furious 7," which is currently slated for release in July.

"Your humble spirit was felt from the start," Ludacris, Walker's "Fast & Furious" co-star, said on Twitter. "Wherever you blessed your presence you always left a mark, we were like brothers." □

Stay classy: Ron Burgundy co-anchors newscast

**DIRK LAMMERS
Associated Press**

Television viewers in Bismarck, North Dakota, were treated to some real class this weekend when none other than the great Ron Burgundy read them the news. Actor and comedian Will Ferrell reprised his "Anchorman" role for KXMB's Saturday night news broadcast. The former "Saturday Night Live" star is promoting "Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues," a sequel to the 2004 film about a fictional news team's sexist reaction to the arrival of an ambitious female reporter.

Dressed in his signature rust-colored three-piece suit and a striped tie, Ferrell read stories off the teleprompter, punctuated them with exaggerated

eye blinks and engaged in witty banter with weekend anchor Amber Schatz and the rest of the Bismarck news team.

Schatz said she has watched the original "Anchorman" about 30 times, and the hardest part of co-anchoring the newscast with Ferrell was holding back laughter every time he spoke in character.

"The second he said, 'Good evening, I'm Ron Burgundy,' I lost it," Schatz said Sunday. "It was really hard not to laugh."

Ferrell also clowned around, popping into Schatz's screen while she read a story and telling her after a commercial break, "Amber, you look lovely to-night" before asking her if she was married.

When Schatz told him she wasn't married, Ferrell replied, "Well I am, so don't get any ideas."

The online video of the 30-minute newscast, which is making the rounds on social media, is part of a widespread marketing campaign for the movie sequel that has included Dodge Durango commercials, a new Ben & Jerry's ice cream flavor named "Scotch Scotch Scotch," and Burgundy's own exhibit at the Newseum in Washington, D.C.

On Sunday, Ferrell headed to Winnipeg, where he was slated to help cover Canada's Olympic curling trials for broadcaster TSN.

KXMB is one of two CBS-affiliated television stations serving central and western



Will Ferrell as "Ron Burgundy" releases a rock as Glenn Howard and his team look on after the opening ceremonies at the 2013 Roar Of The Rings championship in Winnipeg, Sunday, Dec. 1, 2013.

Associated Press

North Dakota. The Bismarck station shares programming with Minot's KXMC, but the two stations produce separate newscasts.

Schatz, 31, said station managers and salespeople had been planning the appearance for months, but she didn't know anything about it until Wednesday. It was a complete surprise to

viewers.

During Saturday evening's newscast, Ferrell occasionally strayed from the script. While extolling the tale of firefighters extinguishing a trash fire in a Sam's Club parking lot, Ferrell seemed impressed that crews used 500 gallons of water and foam to put out the blaze: "I repeat, 500 gallons." □

The Quest to Belong



Roger Cohen

© 2013 New York Times News Service

With a grandchild about to be born in Atlanta, another on the way in Ho Chi Minh City, I have been thinking about the beginning of the family odyssey; of my great-grandfather, Isaac Michel, and his decision to leave the shtetl in northern Lithuania and head south from Russian pogroms toward the sun, the ostrich feathers, the gold and the promise of South Africa.

I imagine his first sight of Africa in 1896 after the two-week crossing: the teeming dock at Cape Town; the bundles borne all the way from Lithuania; a sea of people - black and white and brown - moving between crates piled on the quayside. Table Mountain traces a line so flat that it seems an apparition. Colors have intensified, scale grown. In the shtetl, everything was circumscribed. Wonders had to be willed from the trance of religious devotion. Here the very earth is exuberant. There are peaks that reach to the heavens.

In the first volume of "Jewish Migration to South Africa: Passenger Lists from the U.K. 1890-1905," I find a reference to I. Michel from Siauliai (Shavel to the Jews) in Lithuania. He traveled, at age 19, on the Doune Castle, departing from England on Aug. 16, 1896. He listed his occupation as "prospector." A great number of the East European Jews making their way to South Africa between the 1880s and 1914 were Litvaks; many of them passed, like my great-grandfather, through the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter at 82 Leaman St. in London's East End, established in 1885 to ease the passage of Jewish trans-migrants from Eastern Europe to South Africa.

Michel, arriving penniless, started out as a peddler. He became a retail magnate. He died on an urban estate in Johannesburg with its arboretum and fish pond and aviary, surrounded by African houseboys and gold-inlaid bibelots, his black, fishtailed Cadillac parked in the beautiful curving driveway.

Immigration is reinvention. Lands of immigrants excise the anguish of the motherland. They invite the incomer to the selective forgetfulness of new identity.

Michel, my mother's grandfather, would not have been surprised by the idea of far-flung descendants, even if Vietnam might have raised an eyebrow.

This prospector understood opportunity, chance encounter - life as action and risk. Like millions of Jews around the dawn of the 20th century, he embraced emancipation to plunge from shtetl and ritual immemorial into the Sturm und Drang of the modern world. The upheaval would prove cataclysmic in Europe. My family skirted the horror.

New opportunity is only one side of the immigrant story, its bright star. The other side, its black sun, is displacement and loss. Among Michel's children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren, in each uprooted generation on the move to Britain and Israel and the United States, there have been sufferers from manic-depression unable to come to terms with the immense struggle involved in burying the past, losing an identity and embracing a new life - as if bipolarity were just that, a double existence attempting to bridge the unbridgeable.

If you dig into people who are depressed, you often find that their distress at some level is linked to a sense of not fitting in, an anxiety about where they belong: displacement anguish.

Give thanks in this holiday season for belonging, for community (that lovely word). Invite the stranger in. Make friends a garden, my mother liked to say, and let it bloom.

Turning time's arrow around, I have journeyed backward through South Africa to Lithuania. During the voyage I found unpublished journals written in Hebrew by another great-grandfather, Shmuel Cohen, who also left Lithuania for Johannesburg more than a century ago.

One of his journals begins: "The 'Book of Man' includes many chapters. Those speaking of others I have learned well. The first, speaking of my own character traits, I have learned but do not know."

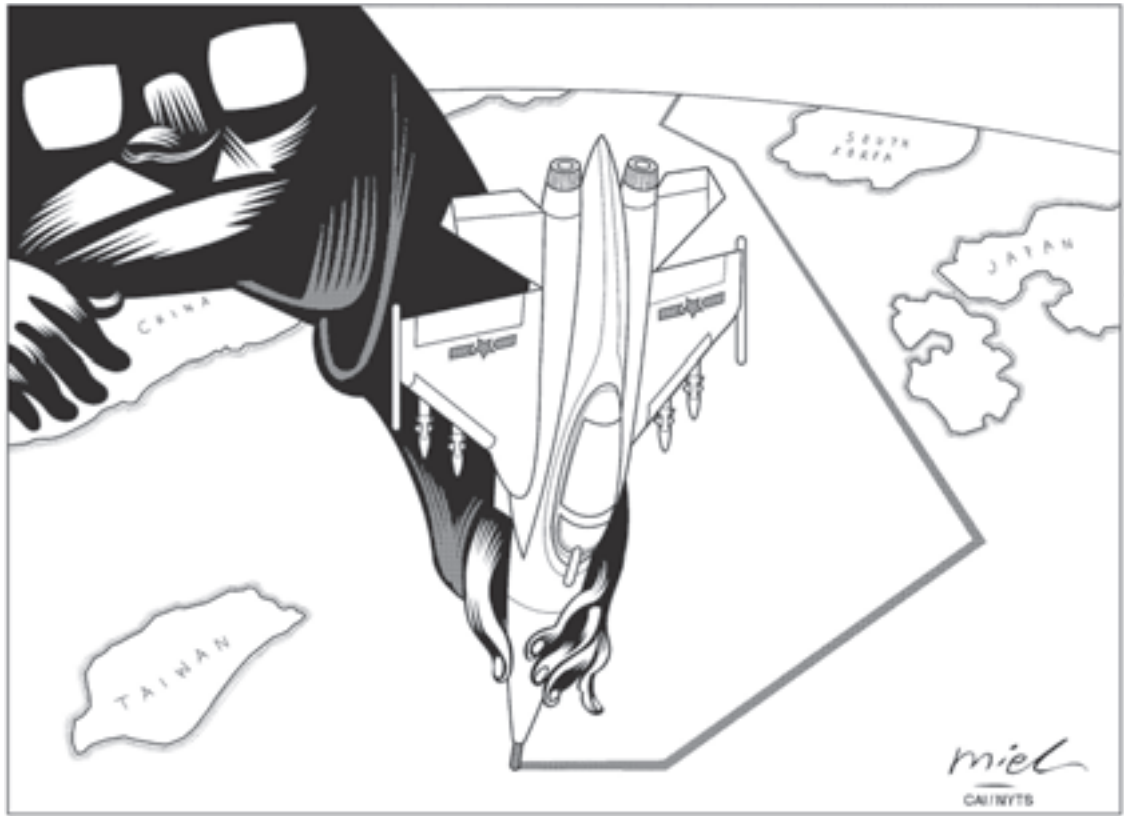
He goes on: "From the very first day that man is old enough to think for himself he commences collecting materials and building blocks, to establish his fort on strong foundations; to be able to rest in it securely in days to come. Working himself continuously eventually he falls under the burden - just as stones piled incorrectly may tumble down."

"While assured in himself, declares he thus 'I am supreme above all creatures,' imposing himself over others; similarly, nations boast, 'You have chosen us from all others,' only leading to acts of hostility against their fellow nations."

"Oh, if only awareness came unto man and he truly knew that all of creation - from the sand granule to the shining star - is connected like one chain."

One chain: A wonderful translation of the journals was provided to me by another great-grandchild of Isaac Michel, a cousin in Israel who has found serenity in a return to Orthodoxy. His sister, like my mother, suffered the torment of manic-depression.

Be free. Belong. Do not forget. Link the chains that made you. □



Obamacare's Secret Success



Paul Krugman

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The law establishing Obamacare was officially titled the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. And the "affordable" bit wasn't just about subsidizing premiums. It was also supposed to be about "bending the curve" - slowing the seemingly inexorable rise in health costs.

Much of the Beltway establishment scoffed at the promise of cost savings. The prevalent attitude in Washington is that reform isn't real unless the little people suffer; serious savings are supposed to come from things like raising the Medicare age (which the Congressional Budget Office recently concluded would, in fact, hardly save any money) and throwing millions of Americans off Medicaid. True, a 2011 letter signed by hundreds of health and labor economists pointed out that "the Affordable Care Act contains essentially every cost-containment provision policy analysts have considered effective in reducing the rate of medical spending." But such expert views were largely ignored.

So, how's it going? The health exchanges are off to a famously rocky start, but many, though by no means all, of the cost-control measures have kicked in. Has the curve been bent? The answer, amazingly, is yes. In fact, the slowdown in health costs has been dramatic.

OK, the obligatory caveats. First

of all, we don't know how long the good news will last. Health costs in the United States slowed dramatically in the 1990s (although not this dramatically), probably thanks to the rise of health maintenance organizations, but cost growth picked up again after 2000. Second, we don't know for sure how much of the good news is because of the Affordable Care Act.

Still, the facts are striking. Since 2010, when the act was passed, real health spending per capita - that is, total spending adjusted for overall inflation and population growth - has risen less than a third as rapidly as its long-term average. Real spending per Medicare recipient hasn't risen at all; real spending per Medicaid beneficiary has actually fallen slightly.

What could account for this good news? One obvious answer is the still-depressed economy, which might be causing people to forgo expensive medical care. But this explanation turns out to be problematic in multiple ways. For one thing, the economy had stabilized by 2010, even if the recovery was fairly weak, yet health costs continued to slow. For another, it's hard to see why a weak economy would have more effect in reducing the prices of health services than it has on overall inflation. Finally, Medicare spending shouldn't be affected by the weak economy, yet it has slowed even more dramatically than private spending.

A better story focuses on what appears to be a decline in some kinds of medical innovation - in particular, an absence of expensive new blockbuster drugs, even as existing drugs go off-patent and can be replaced with cheaper generic brands. This is a real phenomenon; it is, in fact, the main reason the Medicare drug program has ended up costing less than originally projected. But since drugs are only about 10 percent of health spending, it

can only explain so much.

So what aspects of Obamacare might be causing health costs to slow? One clear answer is the act's reduction in Medicare "overpayments" - mainly a reduction in the subsidies to private insurers offering Medicare Advantage Plans, but also cuts in some provider payments. A less certain but likely source of savings involves changes in the way Medicare pays for services. The program now penalizes hospitals if many of their patients end up being readmitted soon after being released - an indicator of poor care - and readmission rates have, in fact, fallen substantially. Medicare is also encouraging a shift from fee-for-service, in which doctors and hospitals get paid by the procedure, to "accountable care," in which health organizations get rewarded for overall success in improving care while controlling costs.

Furthermore, there's evidence that Medicare savings "spill over" to the rest of the health care system - that when Medicare manages to slow cost growth, private insurance gets cheaper, too.

And the biggest savings may be yet to come. The Independent Payment Advisory Board, a panel with the power to impose cost-saving measures (subject to congressional overrides) if Medicare spending grows above target, hasn't yet been established, in part because of the near-certainty that any appointments to the board would be filibustered by Republicans yelling about "death panels." Now that the filibuster has been reformed, the board can come into being.

The news on health costs is, in short, remarkably good. You won't hear much about this good news until and unless the Obamacare website gets fixed. But under the surface, health reform is starting to look like a bigger success than even its most ardent advocates expected. □

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Aruba's Majestic Carnival Season Comes To Life!



PALM BEACH - Palm Beach Plaza Mall new majestic carnival season has started at Aruba's largest mall. The Aruba Carnival is a thrilling show of over-the-top pagentry, produced by thou-

sands and delighting and uniting the entire country. Here's the scoop on how it began.

Carnival was born in 1954, as a series of small street festivals. The Tivoli Club,



Aruba's oldest private social club, was the first to have a pre-Lenten celebration in Oranjestad in February 1944. The Allied victory of World War II was



PALM BEACH PLAZA MALL
More Choices

Little White Dress

Carnival NIGHT

at Palm Beach Plaza Mall
EVERY MONDAY 6:30pm

CHANEL

HUBLOT

UNITED COLORS OF BENETTON

SAMSUNG

TOTTO

basinger

MONT BLANC

Salvatore Ferragamo

LIADRO

SWAROVSKI

LONGINES

PALM BEACH PLAZA MALL

SHOPPING BREAKFAST LUNCH DINNER

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commemorated by an Aruba Festival - a large parade in San Nicolas comprised largely of Caribbean-English immigrants who came to Aruba to work at the Lago Oil Refinery.

The first steel and brass bands debuted a few years later and small parades sprouted here and there.

Tonight at 6:30PM, Palm Beach Plaza Mall will have a great Carnival Show where you can experience for yourself the taste of Aru-

ba's Carnival culture with the opportunity to take pictures with the majestic



carnival dancers with carnival costumes. Come and enjoy the show! □

